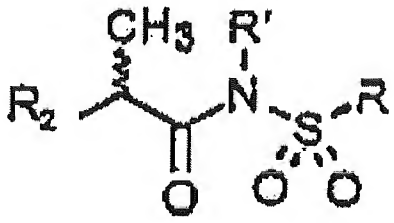
AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. – 4. **(Cancelled)**

5. **(Currently Amended)** A therapeutic method for the treatment of spinal cord injury comprising administering a subject in need thereof a therapeutic effective amount of at least one N-(2-aryl-propionyl)-sulfonamide of general formula (I):



(I)

in which:

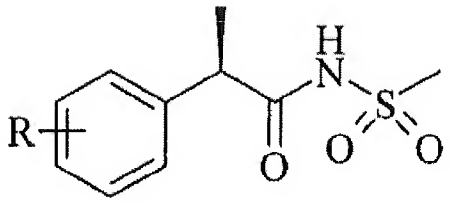
R_2 is an aryl ~~group,~~ group;

R is a straight or branched C_1-C_6-alkyl, trifluoromethyl, cyclohexyl, o-tolyl, 3-pyridyl, 2-pyridyl-ethyl, p-cyano-phenylmethyl, p-aminophenylmethyl, 3-cyano-l -propyl, 4-aminobutyl group, an alkoxyethylene CH_3-$(CH_2)_{ni}$- $(OCH2CH2)_{mi}$- group in which n_i is zero or 1 and m_i is an integer of from 1 to 3, or a P_1P_2N-CH_2-CH_2- group in which P_1 and P_2 are independently H, C_1-C_3- alkyl, benzyloxy-carbonyl, a-, β- or α-pyridocarbonyl, carboxycarbonyl or carbalkoxycarbonyl, or P_1 and P_2 when joined to the N atom which they are linked to, form a phthalimido, ~~piperidino,~~ piperidino or morpholino residue; and

R' is H or straight or branched C_1-C_3-alkyl.

6. **(Previously Presented)** The therapeutic method according to claim 5 wherein R' is hydrogen.

7. **(Currently Amended)** The therapeutic method according to claim 5, comprising administering the compounds of formula (Ia):



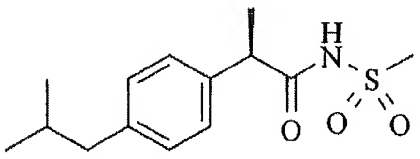
(Ia)

wherein R represents one to three substituents, which are the same or different, selected from hydrogen, halogen atoms, C_1-C_4-alkyl, C_1-C_4-alkoxy, hydroxy, C_1-C_7-acyloxy, cyano, nitro, amino, C_1-C_3-acylamino, halo C_1-C_3-alkyl, halo C_1-C_3-alkoxy, benzoyl, 4-(2-methyl-propyl)-phenyl, 3-phenoxy-phenyl, 2-[4-(1-oxo-2-isoindolinyl)phenyl], 5-benzoyl-thien-2-yl, 4-thienoyl-phenyl, and
C_1-C_2-halogenoalkylsulphonyloxy.

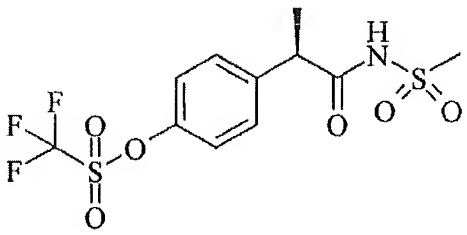
8. **(Previously Presented)** The therapeutic method according to claim 7 wherein R represents hydrogen, 4-isobutyl, 3 -benzoyl or 4-trifluoromethanesulphonyloxy.

9. **(Previously Presented)** The therapeutic method according to claim 7 wherein R represents, 4-isobutyl or 4-trifluoromethanesulphonyloxy.

10. **(Previously Presented)** The therapeutic method according to claim 7 comprising administering at least one of the compounds of formula (II) and (III).



(II)



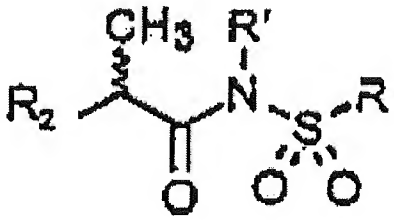
(III)

11. **(Previously Presented)** The therapeutic method according to claim 5, wherein the N-(2-aryl-propionyl)-sulfonamide is intravenously or intramuscularly administered.

12. **(Previously Presented)** The therapeutic method according to claim 11 wherein the N-(2-aryl-propionyl)-sulfonamide is administered as a bolus.

13. **(Previously Presented)** The therapeutic method according to claim 5, wherein the N-(2-aryl-propionyl)-sulfonamide is daily administered at least once in amounts ranging from 1 to 1500 mg.

14. (**New**) A therapeutic method for blocking oligodendrocyte apoptosis, reducing tissue damage and promoting functional recovery following spinal cord injury comprising administering a subject in need thereof a therapeutic effective amount of at least one N-(2-aryl-propionyl)-sulfonamide of general formula (I):



(I)

in which:

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or carbalkoxycarbonyl, or P_1 and P_2 when joined to the N atom which they are linked to, form a phthalimido, piperidino or morpholino residue; and

R' is H or straight or branched C_1-C_3-alkyl.